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General and complete disarmament: measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 8 December 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, I draw your attention to the following information:

In the course of this year, the American administration has persistently waged a campaign alleging that Syria could use chemical weapons in the current crisis. We have repeatedly stated publicly and through diplomatic channels that Syria will not under any circumstances use any chemical weapons that it may have, because it is defending its people from terrorists backed by well-known States, at the forefront of which is the United States of America.

The media reports that have been circulating give cause for concern. We are genuinely worried that certain States that support terrorism and terrorists could provide the armed terrorist groups with chemical weapons, and then claim they had been used by the Syrian Government. The Turkish newspaper *Yurt* has reported that Al-Qaida members are producing chemical weapons in a laboratory near the Turkish city of Gaziantep that they are threatening to use against Syrian civilians. *Yurt* has drawn attention to videos posted on the Internet demonstrating how to make poison gas from such chemicals as Al-Qaida has obtained from Turkish companies and tested on living creatures. It would be more appropriate for the States leading the campaign against Syria to monitor those actions and prosecute the terrorist perpetrators and the parties that facilitated their access to chemicals.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic also wishes to state that, in order to protect its people, it requested the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (UNSMIS), when it was active in Syria, to visit a private-sector chlorine laboratory east of Aleppo in order to inspect and secure the contents, which terrorist groups were planning to bring under their control. However,

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UNSMIS was unable to visit the facility because its team came under fire from terrorist groups. The facility, which contains tons of toxic chlorine, was recently seized by terrorist groups. The fact that they did so during this latest American and Western campaign means that the situation is all the more dangerous.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic warns that the terrorist groups could use those weapons against the Syrian people. It regrets that the international community has not taken action to address these developments and hold the terrorist groups' supporters accountable under the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The campaign against Syria is characterized first and foremost by its amorality. States such as the United States of America that have used chemical and similar weapons are in no position to launch such a campaign, particularly because, in 2003, they used the pretext of Iraq having weapons of mass destruction in order to justify their invasion and occupation of that Arab country. Since the issue was raised, Syria has stated countless times that it will not under any circumstances use any chemical weapons that it may have against its own people. It has also emphasized its adherence to its legal obligations under the conventions and protocols that it has ratified. Indeed, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted a draft resolution to the Security Council in late 2003 concerning ridding the Middle East of chemical, nuclear and biological weapons of mass destruction. However, the United States of America and its satellite States obstructed the draft resolution and resisted its adoption by the Council. Syria is therefore not surprised that, only a few days ago, the United States of America thwarted a United Nations initiative to hold a conference by the end of 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Its aim was to defend Israel, the only party in the region that has not signed the conventions on weapons of mass destruction.

These campaigns will prove futile, as Syria has always cherished its independence and sovereignty. Scurrilous media campaigns cannot mislead our people or world public opinion, which has gradually come to realize the truth of the conspiracies against Syria and the true reasons behind the continuing bloodshed, for which the terrorist groups and their supporters will be held responsible by the world and by history.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 94 (dd) and 105, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative